

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Below is the entire set of pending claims pursuant to 37 C.F.R. 1.121(c), with any mark-ups showing changes made by the present Amendment. This listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

1. (Canceled)
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 + 8 further comprising an external fixator.
4. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 + 8 further comprising the first portion having a length less than the length of the second portion.
5. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 + 8 further comprising the first portion and the second portion having respective elongated configurations defined in part by respective generally rectangular cross sections.
6. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 + 8 further comprising the first portion and the second portion having substantially the same length.
7. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 1 + 8 further comprising: a first control for incremental positioning of the first clamp assembly relative to the coupling assembly independent of the position of the second clamp assembly; and a second control for incremental positioning of the second clamp assembly relative to the coupling assembly independent of the first clamp assembly.
8. (Currently Amended) A fixation device for treatment of an orthopedic indication comprising:

a first portion and a second portion;
a first clamp assembly for releasably attaching the first portion with at least one bone pin;
a second clamp assembly for releasably attaching the second portion with at least one bone pin; and
a coupling assembly joining the first portion with the second portion; the coupling assembly operable to allow rotation of the first portion and the second portion relative to each other in generally vertical and horizontal planes, the coupling assembly comprising:
~~The device of claim 1 wherein the coupling assembly further comprises:~~ a first worm gear assembly having a first worm gear mounted on one end of the first portion;
~~a second worm gear assembly having a second worm gear mounted on an adjacent end of the second portion;~~ and the first worm gear assembly and the second worm gear assembly being engaged with each other; and
one or more controls for incremental rotation of the first portion and the second portion relative to each other in the horizontal plane independent of rotation in the vertical plane and incremental rotation of the first portion and the second portion relative to each other in the vertical plane independent of rotation in the horizontal plane.

9. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 8, wherein the one or more controls comprises further comprising: a first worm shaft operable to incrementally position the first worm gear; and a second worm shaft operable to incrementally position the second worm gear.

10. (Currently Amended) The device of claim 8, wherein the one or more controls comprises further comprising: a first clamp screw operable to lock the first worm gear in a desired position relative to the first portion; and a second clamp screw operable to lock the second worm gear in a desired position relative to the second portion.

11. (Withdrawn) A method for treatment of an orthopedic indication comprising:
releasably attaching a first portion of a fixation device with at least a first bone pin;
releasably attaching a second portion of the fixation device with at least a second bone

pin spaced from the first bone pin; incrementally adjusting articulation of the first portion relative to the second portion and independent of the second portion; and incrementally adjusting articulation of the second portion relative to the first portion and independent of the first portion.

12. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11 wherein adjusting articulation between the first portion and the second portion of the fixation device further comprises adjusting a first worm gear and a second worm gear.

13. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11 further comprising: releasably attaching the first portion with the at least first bone pin by a first clamp assembly; releasably attaching the second portion with the at least second bone pin by a second clamp assembly; incrementally adjusting the position of the first clamp assembly relative to the second clamp assembly; and incrementally adjusting the position of the second clamp assembly relative to the first clamp assembly.

14. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11 further comprising: incrementally adjusting articulation of the first portion relative to the second portion by rotation of a first worm gear; and incrementally adjusting articulation of the second portion relative to the first portion by adjusting the position of a second worm gear.

15. (Withdrawn) The method of claim 11 further comprising: securing the first portion in an articulated position relative to the second portion by clamping a first gear in a desired position; and securing the second portion in a desired articulated position relative to the first portion by clamping a second worm gear in a desired position.

16. (Withdrawn) An external fixation device comprising: a first portion and a second portion coupled with each other by a first worm gear assembly and a second worm gear assembly; the first worm gear assembly operable to incrementally adjust rotation of the first portion relative to the second portion in a generally horizontal plane;

and the second worm gear assembly operable to incrementally adjust rotation of the second portion relative to the first portion in a generally vertical plane.

17. (Withdrawn) The external fixation device of claim 16 further comprising: the first worm gear assembly having a first worm shaft and a first worm gear; the second worm gear assembly having a second worm shaft and a second worm gear; and the first worm gear securely attached with the second worm gear.

18. (Withdrawn) The external fixation device of claim 16 further comprising: a first clamp assembly for releasably attaching the first portion with a pair of bone pins; and a second clamp assembly for releasably attaching the second portion with at least a pair of bone pins.

19. (Withdrawn) The external fixation device of claim 16 further comprising: a first control operable to adjust the rotation of the first portion relative to the second portion independent of the second gear assembly; and a second control operable to adjust rotation of the second portion independent of the first worm gear assembly.